

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated May 21, 2004, claims 1 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, due to informalities therein, which have been corrected by the present Amendment. Claims 1 and 6 are submitted to be in full compliance with all provisions of §112, second paragraph.

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito et al. in view of Nakai et al. Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito et al. in view of Nakai et al., further in view of Yamamoto. Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito et al. in view Nakai et al., further in view of Rosenberg. Claims 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito et al. in view Nakai et al., further in view of Roberts.

These rejections are respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

With regard to independent claim 1, the Examiner acknowledged that the Saito et al. reference does not disclose an input device having a detector which detects movement of a mouse in one of a number of predetermined directions, and which selects one of the control functions dependent on one of these directions, so as to alter the display of the image on the display unit, as claimed in claim 1. The Examiner relied on the Nakai et al. reference as disclosing an input device that the Examiner considers to correspond to the aforementioned input device as claimed in claim 1. The Examiner stated the Nakai et al. reference teaches a method for assisting a user to operate a pointer so as to move the pointer onto a desired object by a pointing device. The Examiner stated Nakai et al. teaches detecting a pointer movement direction in which the user wants to move the pointer, in accordance with

a movement of the pointer by the pointing device, and displaying candidate objects located within a predetermined range of the pointer movement direction and selecting the object from the displayed candidate objects. The Examiner cited language at column 2, lines 44-52 of the Nakai et al. reference as providing such a teaching. The Examiner further stated Nakai et al. teaches switching between an active state in which a system for implementing the assisting method is on, and an inactive state in which the system for implementing the assisting is off. For this teaching, the Examiner cited language in Nakai et al. at column 2, line 67 through column 3, line 3.

It is not clear to the Applicants how either of the cited passages from the Nakai et al. reference is considered by the Examiner to constitute a teaching to implement or select different control functions, which cause the display on a display unit to be altered, dependent on the direction of movement of a mouse.

With regard to the teaching of Nakai et al. noted by the Examiner that the assisting method can be placed in an activated state or a non-activated state, Applicants do not find any teaching in the Nakai et al. reference that activation or deactivation of the assist method is in any manner dependent on the direction of movement of the pointer on the screen or the direction of movement of an input unit, such as a mouse, which controls movement of the pointer on the screen. If the Examiner considers activation and deactivation of the assist method to be different control functions, Applicants do not find any teaching in the Nakai et al. reference that either of these control functions is dependent on the direction of movement of the pointer and/or a mouse.

Applicants acknowledge that the Nakai et al. reference teaches the use of a pointer, which is movable in a number of different directions, to allow selection of candidate objects located within a predetermined range of the pointer mover direction, however, when this procedure is executed in the Nakai et al. reference, there are no different control functions that are selected dependent on the direction of movement of the pointer. The method disclosed in the Nakai et al. reference is merely for the purpose of simplifying manipulation of the movement of the pointer so as not to require precise positioning thereof on the screen, in order to assist computer usage by, for example, a handicapped person or an aged person (Nakai et al., column 2, lines 53-65). For this purpose, a limited movement of the pointer within a particular region of the display is detected, and this movement is interpreted as designating a point or location within an annular area. This point or location, together with the center point or origin of the annular area, defines a line (vector), which proceeds through a displayed icon. As explained at column 3, lines 41-47, this allows a candidate object to be displayed with movement of the pointer over a short distance, i.e., a shorter distance than would be the case if the pointer had to traverse the complete distance to the candidate object. The method disclosed in the Nakai et al. reference, however, is merely for the purpose of getting the pointer to a candidate object with a minimum amount of manually-operated movement. As explained at column 7, in the paragraph beginning at line 25, in step S4, the object is selected from the candidate objects by clicking the pointing device. When the object is selected, this may or may not result in a control function being selected (the Nakai et al. reference provides no teaching on this point), but even if this were the case, the selection of such a control function is not direction-dependent, but is dependent

on the particular candidate object (icon) that the pointer has come to designate. The pointer effects one and only one control function, namely to define a line or vector by means of the aforementioned center point or origin and the location of the pointer within a restricted range of movement. The same control function is always applied by the pointer, namely "define a vector by means of the origin and the location of the pointer." The fact that movement of the pointer can result in different candidate objects being selected does not alter the fact that these candidate objects are being selected according to the same "rule." No different control function occurs, or is selected, when the pointer is moved in different directions. Moving the pointer in different directions can achieve different results (i.e., different candidate objects being selected), but this is not the same as selecting a different *control function* dependent on a detected direction of movement of the pointer. As noted above, in the context of the Nakai et al. patent, "selection" of one of the candidate objects merely means that the pointer has come to point to that candidate object. Some other action (which is not in any way directionally dependent) must then be undertaken by the operator in order to do anything with the candidate object that has been selected in this manner.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to add further details describing the claimed procedure discussed above. New claim 9 has been added to state that the different control function is selected *exclusively* dependent on the detected direction of movement, meaning that no other action needs to be taken by the operator in order for the control function to be selected.

All claims of the application are therefore submitted to be in condition for allowance, and early reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

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